

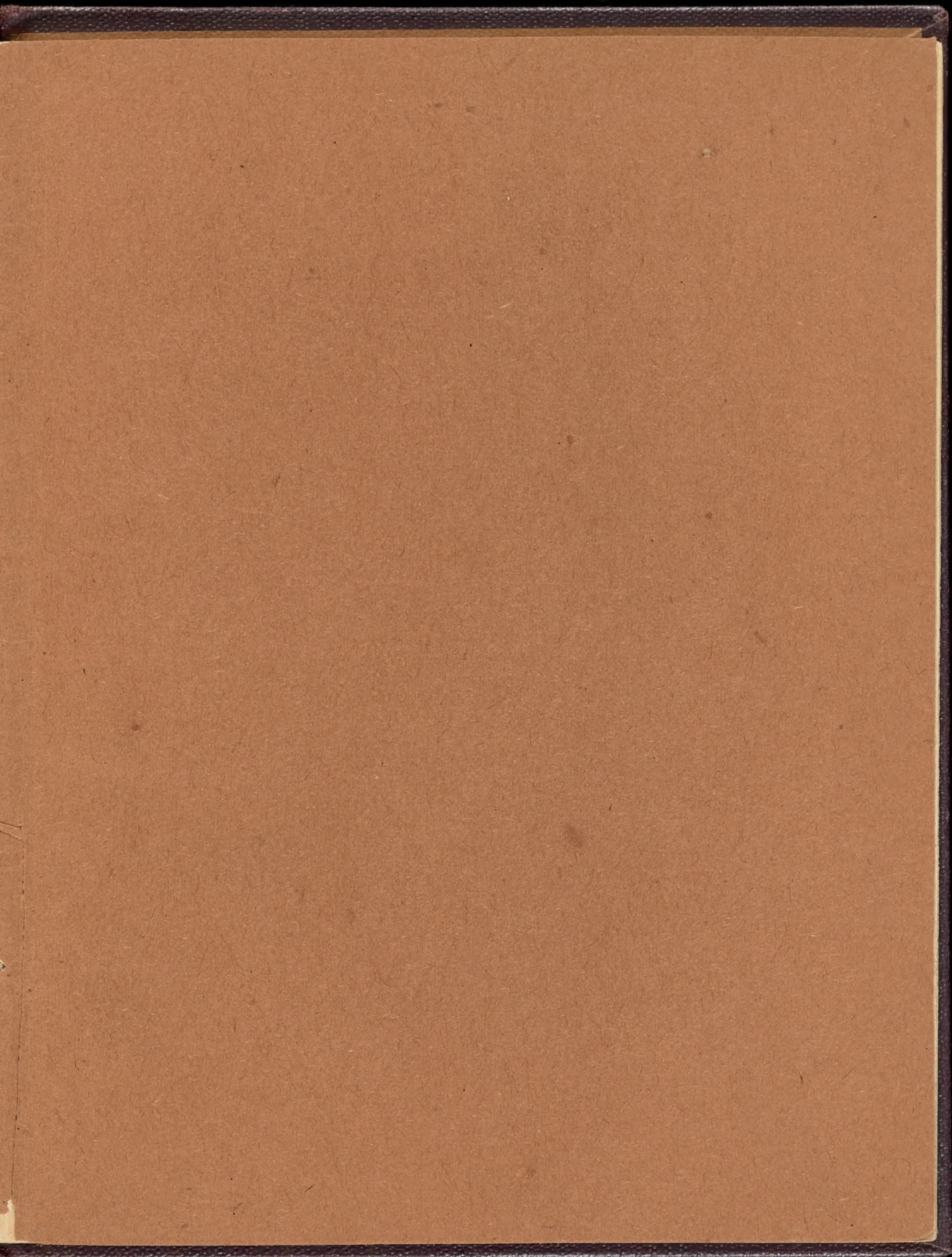


MEISSEN.















1357  
**MEISSEN**

ITS

**CATHEDRAL, ALBRECHTSBURG**

AND

**CHINA-MANUFACTORY.**

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**MEISSEN 1878.**

Verlag von Louis Mosche.



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There are few places more favourably situated in the kingdom of Saxony, than the old city of Meissen. Sunny hills with distant views, vineclad slopes on the bank of the river Elbe, pleasant valleys, and fertile plains are surrounding it in varied turn. Connected with Dresden by rail-road and steamboat, the way down from Dresden requires only about one hour's time.

The old castle of Meissen, called the Albrechtsburg, and its beautiful cathedral are most attractive points to their numerous visitors, and tell of long past centuries.

The Royal China-Manufactory, the mother of all European manufactories of this most precious kind of pottery, verifies its old fame, and adds to it, by its most elaborate productions.

Thus the town and its surroundings offer in various respects a great many remarkable points, and the following lines are written for the purpose of being a trusty guide to English speaking visitors of the Cathedral, the Albrechtsburg, and the China-Manufactory of Meissen.

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Up to the X<sup>th</sup>. century the country, wherein Meissen is situated, was inhabited by a slavic tribe, called the Daleminces. It was not before the year 932 p. Ch. that the German emperor Henry I. had defeated them, and built a fortress on the left bank of the river Elbe, to secure in future the conquered country against reinvasions of its former inhabitants. This first bulwark stood on the eastern foot of the same hill, whereon now the castle is towering. Soon afterwards very probably, the dominating hill itself was crowned with a stronghold. Under the reign of Henry's son and successor Otto I., who was intent on propagating Christendom among the surrounding heathens, the foundation of the first church was laid, and a bishop installed. This bishopric was maintained from 965 till 1542, under the administration of 44 bishops.

The first church may soon have been found too small for the number of its congregation, and bishop Witigo I. (1266—1293) began soon after his investiture the reconstruction of the present Cathedral.

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## THE CATHEDRAL.

The hill, on which the castle of Meissen is situated, has a rapid slope on all sides, and a very high bridge, built in the 13<sup>th</sup>. century, connects it with the opposite hill. An old gate, lately rebuilt, it shows now the figures of St. George, and St. John, painted in scrafitto, leads into the castle-yard, which is surrounded by buildings, showing the architecture of several centuries, in the midst of which the cathedral is situated.

The outer shape of this beautiful edifice underwent many a change in the course of centuries. Parts were destroyed, and additional buildings were erected. The whole building is less imposing by its size, than by its noble proportions, its lofty simplicity, and the purity of style, by which it ranks among the best masterpieces of old German architecture.

The reconstruction was achieved in 1290. It comprised the high-altar and that part of the nave up to the southern entrance; though the plan of the whole building may have been laid under the reign of Witigo I. After the death of this bishop, war-troubles interrupted the progress of the reconstruction, till Witigo II. (1312—1342) continued it to the substruction of the western tower. Its achievement took place in the year 1400 under bishop Thymo. This western tower is called: „The Broad Tower.“ Formerly it was surmounted by two pyramidical spires, which were



thrown down by a flash of lightning on the 25<sup>th</sup>. of April 1547, and never have been rebuilt. A brassplate, laid in a tombstone in the church, shows the hole through which the lightning entered the ground. The spires were of the same construction as the perforated steeple in the corner between the high-altar and the transept. This steeple is a square building of slender proportions, and forms beyond the roof of the church two low stories, and then it changes into an octagon with pyramidical turrets. Upon this octagon is a stone-cut gallery with four small turrets, and behind this gallery the octagonal spire rises. It is formed of eight ribs, connected by iron bars, and shows perforated ornaments. The top is crowned by a flower in the shape of a cross. The whole steeple is 234 feet high.

By the side of this steeple rises the beautiful fronton of the transept, built up in the purest gothic style, both its sides flanked by neat turrets, and ending in a large cross, adorned with lilies.

The very old chapel of St. John is joined at the left of the transept. A stone inside of it shows the year 1269, and so the chapel is of the first period of rebuilding the cathedral. The window contains glass-paintings of recent date. (The figures of St. John and St. Paul.)

The principal entrance of the church is hidden by a joined chapel, built in the 15<sup>th</sup>. century on purpose of containing the tombs of princely personages of Saxony.

We now enter the church by a fine portal situated on the southside, close to the chapel of St. John. It forms a pointed arch of broad structure, moderated by perforated implections. Seven statues, placed under canopies, form the principal ornaments of this portal.

The upper figure represents the holy virgin Maria, crowned as queen of heaven; next to her: St. Agnes and St. Barbara, then follow St. Katharine, and another female Saint without at-



tributes, before which are standing the two patrons of the church, namely: St. John, the Evangelist, and St. Donatus.

The inside of the church is built in the shape of a latin cross, the base of which is formed by the broad tower, the nave is the shaft of the cross, the transept forms the arms, and the high-altar the top.

The vault, supported by 14 pillars, is 64 feet high. The shafts of slender columns lean lightly upon the pillars; their capitals being decorated with foliage of the richest ingenuity. The nave is 168 feet long by 68 wide, the high-altar 96 feet long by 32 wide. The high-altar is separated from the nave by a gallery, built by bishop John of Ysenberg in the year 1350. In the middle of this gallery stands the altar of the holy cross. This altar is adorned by a picture painted by Lucas Cranach, who was a personal friend of Dr. Martin Luther. (L. Cranach lived from 1472—1553.) The picture is divided into sections, the middle section represents the crucifixion of the Saviour, the offering of Abraham, and the elevation of the brazen snake. The right wing shows the discovering of the holy cross, and the left one: the appearance of the cross in the clouds.

A door on either side of this altar leads to the high-altar. Over each of these doors is a stone-figure, one representing St. Bartholomew, the other St. Basile.

## THE HIGH-ALTAR.

Entering the high-altar one sees the wooden pews of the former prebendaries. These pews are separated from each other by small columns with nicely sculptured foliage in their capitals, and crowned by fine gothic canopies. The picture of the altar represents the three holy kings, worshiping the infant Jesus Christ. This altar is standing in the same place as that of the first



church, and, very probably, has been kept during the achievement of the reconstruction.

History tells us: that in the year 1156 Conrad the Great, head of both lines of the Saxon houses, laid down before this very altar his trusty sword, and all the ensigns of his power, to turn monk. He went into a monastery, where he died in the following year, bare of all earthly splendour.

Immediately before the altar are two tombstones, covering the remains of Margrave William the one-eyed, and his Marchioness. The brazen figure of the Margrave, and coat of arms have fallen a prey to plunderers during the thirty year's war.

The fine tabernacle, on the left of the altar, shows in its lower part three shrines, separated from each other by iron bars, and secured by iron gratings. Surmounted by a rich stone-cut crowning, it spires up in a pyramide, and ends in a flower. It is indeed lamentable that it has suffered damage about the centre.

At the side of this tabernacle is a door, leading to the sacristy, over which are standing on pedestals the coloured statues of Emperor Otto I, and his second wife Adelheid, and opposite them, those of the Evangelist John, and bishop Donatus. They are ranked among the best works of sculpture of the 13<sup>th</sup>. century, and are distinguished for a faithful representation of the peculiarity of the costumes of that period.

Of the numerous painted windows, which formerly adorned the church, only a few are remaining on the eastern side of the high-altar, representing scenes from the holy story.

The sacristy (formerly All Saints Chapel) gives through its windows a very fine view of the river, and the opposite hills.

Reentering the nave of the church, we perceive the whole flooring covered with tombstones. The oldest of these are on the right side of the altar of the holy cross. They show no inscription, but contain a mitre and a crosier. The most remar-



kable ones of the rest, which partly show well conserved inscriptions, are those of Witigo I. († 1293) the rebuilder of the present church, and of Witigo II. († 1312) the enlarger of it, John of Ysenberg (1370), Conrad of Wallhausen (1375), Nicolaus of Meissen († 1411). All these tombstones lie at the foot of the altar.

The most celebrated among the bishops of Meissen was Benno, who died 1106. He is said to have performed miracles, and was canonized by Pope Adrian VI. in the year 1523. At the time of the reformation his remains were taken to Munich, where they are objects of adoration by the catholics to the present time. Separated from the nave by a trellised iron-gate is a chapel (the same, which hides the main-entrance), built 1423—1425, on purpose of containing the tombs of Saxon Dukes, and of their families. In the middle of this chapel stands the monument of Frederic, surnamed the Warlike. It is cast in brass with a representation of the duke, with a long sword in his hands, lying upon it. The tomb itself is richly decorated with symbolic figures, angels and coat of arms. Around it are the tombs of his family, and of Dukes of Saxony, covered with beautifully engraved brassplates.

The principal door of the cathedral is very richly decorated with statues and reliefos. The topmost figure represents the Saviour with St. Maria and St. John.

On either side are arranged the twelve apostles; all these figures stand on consoles with angels in a praying attitude under each, and under canopies similarly crowned. The two figures below the apostles represent: Bishop Donatus on the right, and St. John on the left. The three reliefos inside the arch show: the coronation of St. Maria, the birth of the Saviour, and the three kings, worshiping the infant Christ. The whole portal seems to be of a more recent date, than the substruction of the broad tower.



To the southside of this chapel is joined a smaller one, erected by Duke George the Bearded († 1539). The low portal is constructed of marble and serpentine stone, and contains in relief, cut in alabaster, the inhuming of the Saviour by an Italian artist. Covering the remains are two brass-plates, whereon is engraven a representation of the Duke and Duchess Barbara. A picture, opposite the tombs represents the descent from the cross, and George and Barbara worshipping the Saviour.

Reentering the nave just below the organ-loft, the spectator enjoys a full and most effective view of the whole church. It shows now the simplicity of all protestant churches; but at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup>. century 56 altars were scarcely sufficient for saying the number of masses, and two hundred priests were engaged in worshipping God, and the Saints. Rich were the ornaments, and most valuable the treasures of gold, silver, and precious vestments. They were taken away in consequence of the reformation. It was on the 10<sup>th</sup>. of October 1542, when the cathedral was delivered up to the protestants.

Connected with the cathedral by the cross-way is the chapel of St. Maria Magdalene, built in the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup>. century. It is remarkable for its noble simplicity of architecture.

The cross-way, surrounding the yard before this chapel, shows two different periods of architecture. That part, next to the church is of the 13<sup>th</sup>. century, and the other three sides are of the 15<sup>th</sup>. century.

Those wishing to enjoy a most picturesque view on the surrounding country, may ascend to the platform of the broad tower. The castle-yard, and the city of Meissen are spread out at their feet, and far in the distance Dresden and the Switzerland of Saxony can be seen on a clear day.

South-east of the crossway is the castle of the former bishops. It was built in 1476 and the following years under bishop John



of Weissbach by the same architect, who built the Albrechtsburg. At present it contains a court of justice.

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## THE ALBRECHTSBURG.

Of all the old Gothic Castles of Germany none make such a splendid display of architecture, as does this magnificent edifice. Built on purpose to be an outguard of German culture, and a stronghold against the enemies of Germany, the first residence of the Margraves being much damaged during several sieges, Duke Albrecht of Saxony, surnamed the Courageous, had himself a castle built, which answered better the pretensions of taste and comfort. From 1471 to 1483 master Arnold from Westphalia was leading architect. Duke Albrecht took profit of every interval of war, to come and watch the progress of the building, and when it was achieved in 1483, the hero, whom his soldiers called: The German Roland, choose this castle for his favourite residence, here to cultivate the acquaintance of learned men, to whom he was a friend and protector.

Being built in the style of later Gothic, the castle shows two buildings joined at right angles. The principal part is adjacent to the church, and the smaller one parallel with it. They contain four floors above the ground, and two vast underground stories; the later, formerly serving for cellars, containing space for about 1200 large barrels of wine.

The outer appearance of the castle, viewed from the river-side, is very imposing with its projecting structure, and a slender



tower, containing real masterpieces of arched cabinets. To be shown through the inner appartments visitors may apply to the castellan.

From the year 1710 till 1863 the castle was occupied by the Royal China-Manufactory of Saxony. Many were the destructions caused by it being fitted out for the purpose of this manufactory. Walls were pierced, other walls were erected, and of all the costly ornaments, of the goblins ectr. nothing was left to show the former richness of decoration. The greatest part of it had fallen a pray to Swedish plunderers after the conquest of the castle in 1645. In 1863 the manufactory was removed to a new building in a suburb of the town, and the reembellishment of the castle began.

Now most of the inner appartments show their former beauty again, and artists of high fame are busy decorating the stately rooms with paintings and sculptures. For this purpose they take their ideas from the former history of the castle. Before and above all the valiant Duke Albrecht, the bronze-statue of whom already adorns the castle-yard, will be glorified in pictures, representing his warfares and the exploits of his bold spirit. Events of historical interest, occurring in later times are the subjects of other pictures, and the statues of princes and heroes form an other part of giving worthy ornaments to the lofty halls.

The ground-floor comprised rooms for the household. Two winding stair-cases lead to the upper floors. One of them is of magnificent structure. It has open galleries in every floor, the first and the second of which are ornamented with stone-cut figures, representing scenes of biblical and other ancient history in the first, and scenes taken from life in the second. Another shows coats of arms, and other ornaments.

From these galleries many a sweet glance from the eyes of fair ladies rewarded the victorious champion below in the tild-



yard; for tournaments were often held during duke Albrecht's government.

The principal rooms of the first floor are: The hall to receive the auditory for the adjacent chapel of St. John; the banqueting hall, and another hall, destined to be the meeting-place of the ducal family.

In most of the halls the vault rests on two or three stone-pillars in the middle, connected to other pillars in the wall by pointed arches. The pillars are in the shape of palm-trees, the stems of which are spreading out in branches, forming the ribs of the vault.

Four large plains in the first hall show the following pictures:

1. The Germans chastise the Slavic gangs of robbers.
2. Emperor Henry I founding the first castle of Meissen.
3. The Germans and their wives defend the castle against Polanders in 1015.
4. The public entrance of emperor Conrad, who transferred the margraviate of Meissen on the house of Wettin, in 1088. (Painted by Dietrich.)

The stone-figure of emperor Otto I., the founder of the cathedral, and that of Bishop Benno, its most celebrated bishop, have their place on either side of the entrance to the chapel of St. John.

The rest of the smaller walls show a chronological succession of representatives of the house of Wettin.

The banqueting-hall, which is more spacious, and more splendid than the former, contains four pictures.

1. The knight Kunz von Kaufungen and his assistants carrying the two princes Ernst and Albrecht out of the castle of Altenburg.
2. The rescue of the prince Ernst by the charcoal-burner Schmidt.
3. The retourn of the princely brothers to Altenburg.



It was in the night before the 8th. of July 1455, when the knight Kunz von Kaufungen took revenge of duke Friedrich, by carrying off his sons. Kunz was forced to hand back again several estates, left to him for a time for losses he had sustained during the war between the brothers Wilhelm and Friedrich. The princes were rescued, and the knight, taken prisoner, was beheaded.

4. The young prince Albrecht crowned as a victor at a tournament in Pirna, when he was not older than 16 years.

(Painted by Professor Oehme.)

Besides these paintings seven statues of painted sandstone represent:

Henry I., Conrad the Great, Henry the Illustrious, Frederick the Warlike, Albrecht the Courageous, George the Bearded, and John George II.

### **The meeting hall**

is adorned with a picture representing the betrothal of duke Albrecht and Sidonia, daughter of the king Podiebrad of Bohemia, and several landscapes and architectonic paintings, as: the house wherein Albrecht was borne: the castle of Grimma, and those of Eger and Tharand, and the cathedral of Emden.

(Painted by Prof. Hofmann and Preller.)

The right wing contains two halls, which show nine pictures:

### **The sleeping room of the Duke contains:**

1. Albrecht defending the fortress of Neuss on the lower Rhine against Charles of Burgund.
2. He is knighting his braves.
3. He forces the entrance to the castle of Negau in Hungaria.
4. He conquers the city of Archol in Flanders.
5. While Albrecht is sitting at table, two ladies, induced to it by emperor Maximilian, cut off the beard of



Albrecht, which he would allow to grow, till he had conquered the whole Flanders (1493).

(Painted by Scholz.)

### **The second hall:**

1. Albrecht enters Harlem as a victor.
2. Surrender of the fortress of Sluys.
3. The West-Frieslanders offer to Albrecht the government of their country.
4. Albrecht relieves the besieged city of Franecker.

(Painted by Scholz.)

### **The second floor.**

This floor contains more halls than the first, of which however only those are selected for being painted, which afford the best light, and sufficient place on their walls.

### **The hall of escutcheons**

is embellished by four landscapes showing:

1. The ancestor's castle the Wartburg.
2. The castle of Wettin.
3. The Albrechtsburg.
4. The castle of Landsberg. (Painted by Schoulant.)

Two halls, wherein formerly the court of appeals had its meeting place, contain five pictures representing:

1. Prince electoral Augustus, called the father of Saxony, joining in a public feast. (Augustus lived from 1526 till 1586.) (Painted by Spiess.)
2. Arrival of the students of Leipzig, and of their professors on the market-place of Meissen, where they are received by the magistrate. (Painted by Spiess.)

During the Shmalkaldish war Leipzig was besieged, and, for this reason, the university was transplaced to the Albrechtsburg, where it remained only a short time. (1547.)



3. The foundation of the college of Meissen by prince electoral Moritz (1543). (Painted by the history-painter Spiess.)
4. The Conventus deliberativus, convoked by Moritz, transacting in his presence the possibility of embracing the interim of Augsburg, in order to establish a peaceable condition among the divergent confessions in the empire. Present are: George von Anhalt, provost of the cathedrals of Magdeburg and Meissen, Professor Forster from Wittenberg, Superintendent Pfeffinger from Leipzig, Cruziger, George Major, Philipp Greher, and Melanchton. (This meeting took place the 1<sup>st</sup>. of July 1548.)
5. An other scene taken from the history of the reformation.  
(Painted by Professor Marshall.)

All these pictures are painted in wax-colours on the walls; this is a way of painting, which makes them as durable as painting in fresco.

### The upper floor

contains several appartments with furowed beams supporting the ceiling, and narrow windows.

In all, the Albrechtsburg comprises seven large halls, 20 rooms, 14 smaller appartments and a number of vaulted cellars. Among them is a dungeon, containing many inscriptions of one of the last prisoners. One of these inscriptions means:

„Man must die, that is certain,  
But never he knows the day nor the hour, when death  
will come;  
So fear thy God, and think, each coming hour may  
be thy last.“

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Another building, connected to the Albrechtsburg by an open galery with wooden pillars, was built on purpose for a grainary. It was erected 1520, and has lately been fitted out in the style of the Albrechtsburg.

At the other side of the cathedral are some more remarkable buildings, the ornamentation of which shows that they belong to the clergy.

The provost's house, built 1497, shows the coats of arms of its builder.

Another, with the stone-figure of St. John over its door, is the dean's house, and was erected 1526.

A third house is the meeting house of the chapter, and shows eight coats of arms in its front.

Taking the way back to the town, we pass the old bridge, through the battlements of which we enjoy on both sides a beautiful view. On the right we look down upon a fresh green valley with its cottages, hidden in fruit-trees, and on the left we see the vineyards on the other side of the river.

A second door, formerly provided with a draw-bridge, leads to the opposite hill.

Most of the buildings, situated on this hill, belonged formerly to the monastery of St. Afra, the church of which was erected 1329.

With exception of the houses of the parson and of the dean, and a few other buildings, the other appurtenance of the said monastery was transformed into one of the first protestant colleges of Saxony in the year 1543, wherein presently 130 boarding-scholars, and a number of external pupils are prepared by professors for their professional study in any faculty of a university.

All the pupils are kept under a close survey, be it in the institution itself, or in the families of the teachers.

The whole premises of the college are newly built.



Steps, leading down from this hill, bring us back to the narrow streets of the town, which show many an interesting old house with scrolls in their gables, and ornamented doors, some of them having inscriptions of a pious meaning. Several buildings are of the 15<sup>th</sup> others of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The townhall on the market-place was erected 1479.

The parish church, situated on the same place, is a plain building, which was erected in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, after the former had been destroyed by fire 1447. The steeple was struck in its upper parts by a flash of lightning during the same thunderstorm which destroyed the spires of the broad tower of the cathedral 1547, and was rebuilt in the same shape, it shows now.

A short way through the inner town leads to the suburb in which is situated

## THE ROYAL CHINA-MANUFACTORY.

The writer of this guide, being for many years employed as an embosser in this establishment, may be permitted to sketch in a few lines the historical points of the useful and noble art of pottery.

In all parts of the globe, thousands of years ago, even in those remote countries, where culture is in its most primitive state, men looked for a material to form receptacles, impenetrable enough to conserve liquids, or to preserve dry fruits from getting wet. Nature had richly furnished the soil with all kinds of plastic clay, very often lying at hand on the surface. Water to



soften this clay, was not more distant, and the first trials to shape the required vase, may have similarized a childish attempt, which is bent upon imitating of clay all shapes before its eyes. Culture grew, and opened the eyes of men, to see the beautiful forms of fruits, of eggs, and of many other gifts of nature. So they found out the first models to be imitated, because they were most fitting for the purpose of constructing their vessels for domestic use. The ready objects were exposed to the burning rays of the sun, or to a fire, to harden them, till at length experience taught them to build up kilns, for which the bricks were made of the same material. In these kilns the vases were hardened by a fire of long duration, and so they got the wanted hardness, which made them fit for being carried to another place, or better to conserve their contents. But all the potteries of the ancients were more or less porous. No glasslike coating prevented the contents of the vases from being spoiled by the moisture penetrating, or the liquids from being absorbed.

In Greece the first glazed vases were made about 3000 years ago. The glacing coat was spread out very thinly over the surface, and showed commonly a black or red colour.

In the occident of Europe it was not before the year 1283, when a potter at Shlettstadt in Alsace, whose name is unknown, invented a glacing, the principal material of which was an oxyde of lead. Nearly the same as is employed now for common ware.

During the middle age, among the Italians Luca della Robbia in Florence about 1430, and Orazzio de Fontana in Pezaro 1540, in France Bernard de Palissy were highly famed for their embellishment of pottery. In the middle of the last century in England the great improver of pottery was Wedgewood. So it was in Europe. But far in advance were the Asiatic nations in perfecting their pottery. At last two thousand years ago the Chinese invented the fine ware, the name of which is derived



from the country of its inventors. To own some pieces of this costly ware, was a privilege and a desire to the monarchs of Europe, and large sums of gold went to China in exchange for this precious pottery.

Among the many monarchs of Germany Augustus the Strong King of Poland and prince elector of Saxony spent the largest sums for this costly ware, and in this way he brought together that fine collection, which is still exhibited to its admirers in Dresden. He gave even once in exchange for a number of big vases, in possession of the King of Prussia, a whole regiment of troopers. But the love of fine collections of China-ware was not his only weakness, he was very fond of other beauties, and the poor people of Saxony could scarcely pay the taxes laid upon them, to provide the necessary means for so splendid a court. No wonder that a young man, who pretended to own the philosopher's-stone, and to have the very receipt of transmuting common metals into gold, was graciously received by this prince. The young man's name was: John Frederic Böttcher, the inventor of the European China. He was born the 2<sup>nd</sup> Febr. 1685, at Scheitz, a small residence in the principality of Reuss, and came to Wittenberg in his flight from Berlin.

Wittenberg, at present belonging to Prussia, was at that time a Saxon fortress. Böttcher had been an apprentice to the chemist Zorn in Berlin. Here he found a manuscript of a certain Hellmont, an alchemist, who ended his life in Switzerland. This and his knowledge of chemistry induced him to search for the philosopher's-stone; this, being a very universal idea at that time. He examined closely all the writings of renowned alchemists, and found a teacher in the art of making gold in a monk, named Laskaris. Böttcher was an ingenious man in his business, but otherwise very light minded. Very often, being short of money, he began cheating his master, in order to acquire the means for



his expenses, and, to conceal the source of them, he pretended to own thoroughly the secret of making gold. Once he showed to his companions a piece of gold, about the length of a small finger, feigning it was of his own making. Of course, this was soon spoken of in a large circle, and Böttcher, apprehending a closer trial of his pretended knowledge, knowing himself to be an impostor, ran away from Berlin to Wittenberg. Meanwhile the rumour, to have a gold-maker in the walls of Berlin, came to the ears of the King of Prussia, and this monarch is told to have felt a great passion in hearing of the adepts escape to the neighbouring country of Saxony. He offered a reward of 1000 thalers for the recovering of Böttcher, and had a great mind to send several of his regiments to Wittenberg, in order to bring him back by force. The commanding officer of the fortress sent word to his court, and the prince-elector, Augustus the Strong, being very glad to have a real goldmaker in his power, caused the young man to be brought to Dresden under a strong escort of horsemen. Arrived in the capital of Saxony he entered into connection with a very experienced natural-philosopher and chemist, named Walther de Tzschirnhausen, and with the governor Prince Egon de Fürstenberg. The former owned a laboratory, and here Böttcher was desired to realize the promises of his pretended art.

He was obliged to work under the observation of Tzschirnhausen. An intended trial to escape from here to Bohemia rendered his surveillance more severe, and for fear of losing the keeper of so important a secret, the king kept him closely confined and guarded. All his further trials, to produce the tincture by which, for instance, he had boasted himself to transmute one part of silver into 180 parts of gold, were in vain, and having pawned his own head to guaranty the success of his promise, he was in the worst situation imaginable. The king himself, when present at Dresden, came to look after the expected gold, and

once he is said to have menaced Böttcher by the following words: Fulfil my desire, else! — The wanting words were easily supplemented by the terrorstricken man: Else you will be hanged!

And so it would have been, if not by a happy chance Böttcher, who was trying a new mixture of clay for making crucibles, had made an invention, which restored him in the favour of Augustus. The crucibles, when coming out of the oven, showed some qualities of the real China-ware, though they were of a red-brown colour. The king bestowed upon him rich presents, but in spite of being a made man, he was not yet at liberty. To keep him better in custody he was desired to remove his present laboratory to the Albrechtsburg in Meissen in the year 1705, where he worked under the never ceasing guard of an officer, and under the inspection of Tzschirnhausen. He was aided by five smelters and a brick-layer, who were kept in such a perfect concealment, that even the families of the smelters knew not the purpose nor the place of their concealment from them.

When in the year 1706 Suedes under Charles XII invaded Saxony, Böttcher and his coworkers were taken to the fortress of Königstein. Here Böttcher tried again to escape in company with several noble prisoners. But finding that his workmen had caught a suspicion of the plot, he betrayed his companions, and alleviated in an ignoble manner his imprisonment.

The following year at the close of the invasion, he came back to Dresden, and began his work anew in his own laboratory, aided by Tzschirnhausen. In the year 1708 the latter died, and, having found two other experienced men, who were very practical in all kinds of pottery, the technical part of the invention was matured in a high degree. During this time Böttcher brought all his faculties into play, to immitate the white China, and to have it just of the same appearance, as the genuine. A happy chance made him successfull.



It was at that time when curled and powdered wigs were fashionable. Once his hair-dresser brought a new sort of powder with him. By chance Böttcher got it into his hands, and, finding it to be of another appearance than the wheat-flour, commonly used for powder, and too heavy for being a vegetable substance, he tried it in a chemical way. He found it to be a clay of the purest white colour, and not at all fusible. This earth came from the Saxon mountains, where a farmer, named Schnorr (pronounce Shnorr), an ancestor of the renowned painter Schnorr of Carolsfeld, had found it on the surface of his fields. He dug it merely for the purpose of selling it for hair powder, and made a very good business with it.

To produce the brown ware Böttcher had probably mixed a certain quantity of felspar to a redish clay, dug in the neighbourhood of Meissen. This ware had not a glazing coat, nor was it transparent like the genuine China-ware. In a similiar way he made his new trials, till in the year 1709 he succeeded in inventing a ware, not only similar, but even of a purer white colour than the Chinese or the Japanese had produced.

Böttcher was not at all without energy and, being a merry man himself, he liked to make others merry also. His ware required five days' and nights' baking, before it was perfectly done, and he is said not to have stirred from his place among his workmen, during this period, but to have kept them in good humour by his jovial conversation.

One day the king assisted at the baking, being highly interested in the new progress of the invention, and was greatly amused by seeing a tea-pot, taken out of the fire when white hot, and being immediately plunged into cold water, showed not the slightest injury.

The king, resolved to reap profit out of the new invention, and the laboratory in Dresden being too narrow he ordered to

have the first China manufactory founded in Meissen. The spacious localities of the Albrechtsburg seemed most favourable for the purpose, and so on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1710 this castle was delivered to Böttcher and his assistants. Great promises were made to artists to provide the necessary hands, and the manufactory began with a number of 88 persons, employed under the directorship of Böttcher.

During the first years of the establishment, he seemed to have a great care for perfecting his work, but soon he began an extravagant mode of living, by which the progress of his work was much retarded. He destroyed his health by strong liquids, and died the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 1719, not older than 34 years. At his decease not more than 26 persons were employed in the manufactory.

His successors were men of great knowledge, and animated by the best will to bring up the establishment to a high point. They understood very well how to choose artists not only to work out their own ideas, but to scrutinize the products of the other employed men. An immense number of new patterns were formed, and large vases, all kinds of large animals, elegant groups and paintings from originals of the Dresden gallery showed a more refined taste, than all the former productions, which were almost mere copies from Chinese shapes and paintings.

After 1750, especially after the war of 7 years durance (1756 till 1763), which was a period of great distress to the whole country of Saxony, new improvements took place. A school of art was erected in order to train up young men as clever artists. This school was richly provided with casts from antique figures, and fine paintings from the gallery, and experienced teachers were the leaders of it.

Several artists were sent to other countries to cultivate their taste by studying fine objects of art, and so the productions



gained the high accomplishment, which spread the reputation of the establishment over all parts of the world.

The prevailing style of that period, when the manufactory was established, and had made its progress was that richly ornamented and very free style called Rococco. No wonder if the greatest part of the models and paintings show it in all its splendid flower.

There are thousands of groups and figures, sets, vases and looking-glasses bearing the features of that time in their graceful attitudes, their rich ornaments, and their bright colours.

No other establishment of this kind has so rich a collection of the most valuable patterns, as that of Meissen, and clever artists are busy inventing new designs. From the isolating bells on the telegraph poles, through the whole scale of dishes and implements, used in chemistry and mechanic, from the plainest dish, used at table, to the richest dinner-set, from the tiny cup, to the largest vase, in every shape and size, all that can be made of our materials, is executed here in the most elaborate style.

Stately rooms offer the most splendid show of all the various patterns, exhibited for sale to their visitors, and to those, who take a more special interest in the method of manufacturing all this costly ware, admission to the workrooms is kindly granted by the administration of the works, through the most interesting parts visitors will be shown by a guide.

The following lines may give a true picture of many procedures in making china.

The principal material used in china-making is Kaolin. This is a white earth, very friable; it shows no ebullition by any acids, and is not fusible at all. It is produced from decayed rocks, containing felspar. We find it in pits very near the surface of

our hills, and the abouts of Meissen are very richly supplied with this and various other sorts of valuable clay.

When taken out of the pit it contains various coarser particles, as mica, grains of quartz and not decayed felspar, these are ejected by washing. This being the first proceeding, I shall give a short explanation of it.

A spacious hall, having two elevated terraces on one end, contains on its most elevated point, a huge tub, filled with the water necessary for this proceeding, and several smaller ones, in which the kaolin is dissolved. By stirring it with shovels the coarsest particles are separated from the kaolin, and sink to the bottom. The water, saturated with kaolin is scooped from the surface, and poured through a very fine sieve into channels sloping slightly. The channels have small prominences at short intervals. The saturated water, flowing slowly down the channels, leaves all the heavier particles behind the prominences, and fills the reservoirs, placed on the ground-floor. Here the kaolin sinks to the bottom, and the water is drawn off by moveable pipes. After this the kaolin is scooped out and dried.

As said before, this earth is not at all fusible, and it requires the addition of a fusible matter, in order to produce the semi-pellucid appearance of porcelain. For this reason we add a fixed quantity of not decayed felspar to the earth. The felspar is calcined, is mashed and then ground between mill-stones to a fine powder. The mixture in the condition of a thin pap, is put into another tub, having a stirring wheel inside. The mixture being perfect, the liquid matter is running into linen bags, and taken into a press, to bring the paste in a plastic consistence. The store of paste, prepared in this way, is left in reservoirs for several weeks, to increase its malleability. After this, the paste is ready to be used for making all the various articles shown in the exhibition-rooms.



The men employed as artists in the establishment, are trained in the school of drawing, painting and modelling. Among these the most talented are chosen to invent new patterns, or to work them out.

The plastic models are made of clay, or of plaster of Paris, and sometimes they are combined of both the materials.

For instance, the body of a round vase with raised ornaments is of plaster of Paris, while the ornaments are made of clay. Models of figures are made of clay and executed sculptorally.

After having finished a model of a group, the sculptor cuts off every projecting part of it, to have over each a mould cast of plaster of Paris.

So we have groups consisting of more than two hundred parts, and the number of all our moulds is immense, for there are several thousands of figures and groups, besides all the many other patterns. The moulds are commonly made of two shells. When they are ready, they are handed to the moulder.

Before this man begins his work of taking impressions, he must get out the air-holes of the paste, and bring it into a homogeneous condition. For this purpose he cuts it into pieces, which he kneads considerably throwing them heavily upon the table and one upon the other. After the paste is fit to moulding, he takes off one shell of the mould, puts a lump of paste into the hollow of it, and there upon he presses the other shell. In a short time, when the porous mould has absorbed some of the water contained in the paste, he opens the mould, and takes out the impression. Pieces of more than an inch in thickness are moulded hollow. The impression of all parts of a group having been taken, they are handed to another man, who trims them. For moulding oval dishes or square ones, vases, baskets &c. a large lump of paste is spread out as long and as broad as the mould of the object. Two rulers of the same thickness, the dish

requires, are put on both sides of the paste. By means of a wire-string the moulder cuts off a leaf of the clay, pressing the wire down along the rulers while cutting. This leaf is put upon or into the mould, and by beating it with a moist sponge against it, the impression is taken. One side of the dish, the same which does not touch the mould, is always made by hands. Large vases must be thicker in their lower parts, than at the top, to stand the heat in baking.

The men who trim the parts of figures a. s. o. are called embossers, and must understand drawing and modelling. Very often this part of manufacturing requires a great deal of skill, taste and time, for the impression is never as exact as necessary, and the joinings of the shells leave always a raised edge. When all parts are trimmed, they are joined with a thin pap of the same paste. After a group is put together, all the necessary things are laid on, as garlands, ties, buttons a. s. o. Very often flowers are used for ornaments. Most of them are made by hands. The arrangement of wreathes on vases is commonly left to the taste of the embosser.

Among the embossers some are employed to perforate dishes. This is done with a small knife. The man handles it following the raised outline of the pattern. After a while the cut is taken out.

Round pieces are made on the potters-wheel. After the clay has undergone the operation for getting out the air-holes, and to have it of an equal softness, the potter throws a lump of paste upon the top-wheel, and moves the wheel below with his feet. His hands are working the clay by pressing and drawing it up to the right size and shape. To have the piece easily gliding through his fingers, he keeps it constantly wet. In this way the object acquires only its rough shape. For getting the exact form, it must be put upon or into a mould, which shows



the ornaments of the piece. He gets the impression of it by pressing it with a moist sponge down on the mould. The outside of a plain plate or a saucer is cut out with a metal pattern, but ornamented dishes are made by hand. For this purpose the impression is left for a while on the mould, to have it a little harder and there-upon the potter works it with hook-shaped, cutting tools. The handles and spouts of tea-pots or cups are moulded separately and stuck on.

All the pieces, when finished, are exposed to the air or to the warmth, to have them perfectly dry, before they are baked.

## THE BAKING.

The china requires two bakings to acquire its semi-pellucid white appearance, and its hardness, but it must never be exposed to the flame itself. So we must put the objects into boxes of fire-clay; a great and variously shaped number of them are required to shelter the ware from getting spoiled by the blaze, and the ashes. The ovens are built of fire-bricks and in the shape of huge cylinders. Each comprises three compartments, one above the other, which are separated by flat vaults, pierced by holes in order to let the flame pass. The ground compartment has five boxes round its outside, and inside a channel with small holes, through which the fire enters to fill the room; in each compartment is left a door for entering it. Below is the hottest place; there the heat is incommensurable. It amounts to more than 2000 degrees centigrade. The top-compartment receives empty boxes, to have them hard enough for putting in the ware. In the middle-room the china gets its first baking, which makes it as hard as plaster of Paris. The boxes are piled

up in the oven at a distance of the breadth of a man's hand, each of the piles containing boxes of the same size and shape. The largest pieces are put in the center. After the oven is filled, (the ground compartment containing pieces, which have got their first baking in the middle room), the door is bricked up and the fire is lighted. A mixture of bituminous and anthracite-coals is found to be the best for our baking. In the beginning the fire is kept burning slowly, but after several hours it devours immense quantities of fuel. In the bricks of the entrance a projecting tube is fixed with a glass in it, through which the progress of the fire is watched. Close behind the bricks are placed some small boxes containing cups, serving for trials. After the fire has burned for about 20 hours, the whole inside of the oven is glowing white, and the time has arrived for drawing out one of the trials. Some projecting bricks are taken out, and by means of long iron tongs, one of the fire-men takes a box out of the oven, and puts it before the surveying functionary for inspection, while another man shuts the hole immediately. This is repeated from time to time, till the surveyor finds the ware is done. Thereupon the fire is ceased, and the ware is left in the oven for about three days to cool gradually before it is taken out.

After the pieces came out of the middle compartment, where they get the first baking, the trade-mark, which shows two blue crossed swords, is painted on the foot of every piece, and the glazing coat is put on. The men, who are employed in the glazing-room, have the pieces placed to their left, while they are standing before a vat, filled with a white liquid. They manage their pieces exceedingly carefully, for in this condition the china is very brittle. They take one piece after the other, and, by a quick moving of the hand, they plunge them into the liquid, and take them out again as quickly as possible. It requires only a moment to have absorbed a couch of sufficient thickness. Other



men in the same room are employed for scraping off the glacing of each foot of the objects, to prevent them from sticking to the fire-box in the second baking.

There are also two colours which are applicable under the glacing, because they bear the immense heat of the second fire. They are: blue, made of cobalt, and a dark green, made of chrome. The blue patterns, chosen for these paintings are partly in a Chinese style. One of them being most in favour is called: the Onion-Pattern.

Not all our figures are glazed. Without glacing they are called: biscuit-figures. The materials for glacing are: felspar, limestone, quartz and pulverized china. The same fire, which makes the china semipellucid, melts the glacing into a perfectly transparent glass, which allows the body of the paste, or the colours underneath it, to shine through.

All the finer paintings, and the precious metals are put on the surface of the glacing, and fixed by an other fire.

## THE PAINTING.

All our colours are, without exception, of metallic origin, and experienced chemists prepare them in our laboratory. The blue of all shades is made of cobalt, the red of iron, the rose-colour of gold and tin, the yellow of antimone a. s. o. To each of the colours is added a fusible matter, which is melted by a heat of about 600 to 800 degrees centigrade.

A machine grinds the colours to the required fineness, and so they are distributed among the painters, who put them together into showy pictures.

A fugitive oil must be mixed to the colours else the fire would cause them to go off in blisters, if they contained a greasy stuff.

More than two hundred painters are employed for giving the final decoration to all the various objects. They perform their duty according to their previous study. There are several rooms for painters, who produce from their own idea a whole spring of flowers on dishes and vases.

In an other room all the lovely groups and figures are painted. Cupids in the most various disguise, groups of elegant ladies, and courtly gentlemen, in an other place is a comical figure, viz: a tailor on goats-back, fitted out with all the implements of his trade, or all sorts of animals in groups, as: birds, lions attacked by dogs, vases representing the elements with their attributes, Jove throwing his flashes of lightning, monkeys playing on all kinds of musical instruments, in all: what fancy can imagine, are samples to be found.

Many artists are busy performing the graver part of painting. The painting of figures, landscapes and similar higher branches of art is left to the most talented artists. Lovely pictures of Watteau, Boucher and Lancret, the old Netherlandish-genre-paintings, and pictures of the most renowned painters of old, are, indelible in colours, dispersed over the world.

The ornaments painted in gold, silver and platina have quite another appearance, before they go through the finishing fire. Gold looks brown, silver grey and platina black.

A peculiar kind of oven, called muffle-furnace, receives the painted objects, in order to fix their colours. These ovens are large boxes of fire-clay fastened in a furnace, their open fore-side is shut by a plate of the same clay. After the whole box is filled with painted objects, the open part is shut, and the fire surrounds the whole box. About 600 to 800 deg. centigrade are sufficient to bring out the bright shine of the colours.



Female hands give the last touch to the ware by burnishing the ornaments of gold, silver a. s. o. with agates.


This done, the ware is ready to be sent over the world as a delight for the eyes, or as a valuable dish adding to the embellishment of the house. The number of functionaries, engaged in the factory is 32, and more than 600 artists and workmen are employed.

Thus the old establishment maintains its high position among all the numerous china-works, and as it is the oldest, a long experience, and the richness of samples, will secure it for times to come.

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The abouts of Meissen are very rich with the most valuable sorts of clay, used in pottery. Our china-earth and the fire-clay, dug in the vicinity are sent far abroad. So it is a matter of consequence that in Meissen rose several fine establishments, which produce ware of high originality. The best of them are two manufactories fabricating stoves and chimneys of the appearance of fine porcelain, decorated with painting and gilding in a most gracious style.

In general, the industry of Meissen is going on in a prosperous way, and its inhabitants, of the number of 13000, living in a healthy country, are of an intelligent and merry character. Much care is bestowed upon the schools; a sum of 800,000 Mark was spent to erect new buildings for city-schools. (The college is built on expences of the government.)



## THE ENVIRONS OF MEISSEN.

The surrounding country offers on both sides of the river, in a distance of not more than an hour's walk, several interesting points of view. Following the Elbe down its left bank, we find the hills drawing closer to both sides of it. Instead of vineyards one sees steep quarries driven into the hard granit of our hills. There, in the space between the hills and the river, about 25 minutes of walk from the town, hidden in a garden, are the ruins of a

### NUNNERY.

This nunnery was erected in the year 1217 in a style which shows the transition out of the Byzantine into the Gothic style. The thirty years war, which destroyed so many fine edifices of ancient issue in Germany, laid down this nunnery also, and of most of its premises only the groundfloor is standing.

The church has a length of 100 feet, and is divided into the upper and the lower choir by a wall in the middle of it. The primitive form of it is a plain basilical one, but the capitals of the columns, in shape of lotos, and the pointed arches of the windows bear the character of the Gothic style. Below of the upper choir is the sacristy, which is very well conserved. Behind it a narrow stair-case leads to the upper choir, whereupon formerly the organ had its place, but presently trees and shrubs are growing lustily.

A chapel was joined to the East of the church, of which three walls are standing. To the North are several apartments, some of which have kept their vaults. The largest of them shows the substruction of a column. Its door and windows have round arches. The next two rooms are the refectory with two windows to the river-side, and a winter-residence of the nuns. The building, adjacent in a right angle, contained the cells.



This nunnery was richly endowed. At the time of the reformation 4 towns and 56 villages, several forests and vineyards belonged to it, and it owned large treasures of gold, silver and jewels. 40 nuns lived here with an abbess, till at length, in the year of its secularization (1570) their number sank to 16.

Part of the revenues of this nunnery, its garden and surrounding fields are transferred upon the college of Meissen.

## SIEBENEICHEN.

An other short walk up the river, leads to the castle of Siebeneichen, situated on the same bank of the river in a beautiful park upon a hill, connected only by its west-side with the chain of the hills.

Two ways lead to this place; one along the river through a small village, hidden in fruit-trees, to an old house of a forester, in front of which the way leads up to the park and the castle. An other way, which is known for the beautiful points of view, ascends from the town and leads over the back of a hill, called „Plossen.“

The oldest part of the castle of Siebeneichen has been erected in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, about 1544. Siebeneichen numbers among the estates of the family von Miltitz.

The beautiful park with its shadowy walks offers the most picturesque views on the charming valley of the Elbe with its sunny hills and agreeable villages; the whole valley from Meissen to Dresden forming almost one line of cottages, interrupted only by gardens and vineyards.

## SCHARFENBERG.

An other castle, the old castle of Scharfenberg, in the distance of about one hour of way from Siebeneichen, shows in its oldest southern parts the style of the bulwarks of the middle-

age. It was erected by Henry I, the founder of Meissen. Its antiquity is warranted by a document written in the year 1227.

Besides several halls, and a long suit of apartments, decorated with the portraits of the ancestors of the family of Miltitz, the owners of this castle, a deep dungeon is shown by the castellan. The narrow compass of this dungeon is supplied with iron rings in the walls, and reminds of the cruel captivities of former centuries.

The eastern part of the castle was destroyed by lightning in the year 1783, and is transformed into a garden-terrace, which offers a most charming view. In a clear day Dresden and the blue outlines of the Saxon-Switzerland may be seen from this point.

Opposite to the castles of Scharfenberg and Siebeneichen, on the right bank of the river, a chain of rocky hills, overgrown with vines, shows a splendid display of pleasant walks and fine views. The most charming point is a steep rock at the southern end of these hills, called the „Posel.“

The steamboat carries the visitors to the village of Scharfenberg, where a ferry-boat lies ready to bring them across the river to the foot of the Posel.

The best wine of our country is growing on this chain of hills. The culture of wine in the abouts of Meissen dates as far back as to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when bishop Benno planted the first vines and cherry-trees.

Upon the hill between the two bridges, connecting Meissen with the right bank of the Elbe, next to the rail-road station, a neat house is built by the owner of a fine restaurant at the hill's foot, where from the visitor of our town may enjoy a parting look on our country.









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